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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DAILY CABLE

Wednesday August 31, 1977 CG NIDC 77-203C



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NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION

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National Intelligence Daily Cable for Wednesday, 31 August 1977.

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The NID Cable is for the purpose of informing senior US officials.

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Eastern Europe

Angola-Portugal
Portugal

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ROMANIA-ISRAEL: Results of Begin Visit

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[redacted] The predictable disagreements over Middle East issues that marked Israeli Prime Minister Begin's five-day visit to Romania, which ended yesterday, are unlikely to disturb the close relations between the two countries.

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[] Begin and his hosts in fact emphasized their mutual desire to pursue closer economic ties, and the communique issued at the end of the visit stated that differences over Arab-Israeli questions would not be allowed to impair "the friendly relations between their two peoples."

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[] On Middle East issues, Begin adamantly rejected appeals by President Ceausescu and Prime Minister Manescu that Israel:

--Withdraw from all occupied Arab territories.

--Agree to the establishment of a Palestinian state.

--Agree to the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization in Geneva peace talks.

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[] The Romanian position on the Arab-Israeli dispute is well known and could hardly have come as a surprise to Begin. Begin probably welcomed the opportunity to air his contrasting views, expecting that they will be passed along by the Romanians to their Arab, East European, and Soviet friends.

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[] The visit also had other positive features, the most important of which was Ceausescu's reported agreement to "consider in a positive spirit" Jewish applications for emigration to Israel.

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SOUTH AFRICA: Tension in Schools

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[] The South African Government's takeover last week of the school system in the black township of Soweto was designed to overhaul the education system in the hope of satisfying some of the demands of Soweto's militant youths, thereby lessening tension in the township. The government undoubtedly also sees immediate and practical advantages in attempting to weaken the cohesiveness of the militant black student leaders and impede the outbreak of further violence.

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[] The government closed Soweto's 40 community high schools last week and withheld funds from them. The 27,000 students who have been attending the schools--which were run

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in a semiautonomous fashion by local school boards--must now re-register before the schools are reopened under the control of the Bantu Education Department.

25X1 [redacted] For over a month, students have been boycotting classes and intimidating teachers, school board members, and even black police as a protest against their education system, which they feel should meet white standards. The government believed the school takeover was necessary to curb the student rebellion.

25X1 [redacted] Recent police raids have discovered instructions on the blackboards of several high schools for making dynamite and gasoline bombs, and police have arrested over 300 people, including some teachers, during the past few weeks. Police have learned of plans for a "Black September" uprising next month and claim to have recently apprehended 10 terrorists armed with Soviet machine pistols.

25X1 [redacted] Although the government is undoubtedly serious about removing some of the inequities in the educational system, it also sees the physical takeover of the schools as a way to drive out or at least seriously weaken the leadership of the militant students. Since last year, the government has systematically arrested the student leaders or forced them to flee the country. The chairman of the student council sought refuge in Botswana last week after being wounded in an altercation between police and students.

25X1 [redacted] The closure of the schools is also a defeat for the Committee of Ten, the moderate group of Soweto residents who joined together last month to try to bring some stability to the township. The committee took on the task of halting the student boycott, but its lack of success will now make it less credible both to the government and to the people of Soweto.

25X1 [redacted] Senior police officials in Soweto, who have shown more moderation in their recent dealings with students than they did during the riots last year, have urged the government to adapt to changing conditions in urban black townships by accepting some of the realities of black politics. In order to bring a peaceful end to Soweto's 14 months of turmoil, however, the government would have to offer the students enough real and immediate change to satisfy their demands. Concessions have been given before, but they have always been too few and too late.

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[] It is difficult to see how the government could now move quickly enough to work out a meaningful solution. Both black and white South Africans look at Soweto as an indicator of trends in the country, and renewed violence there could again spread to other parts of urban black South Africa. []

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CHINA-YUGOSLAVIA: Tito Visits Peking

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[] *At the beginning of Yugoslav President Tito's 10-day state visit to China yesterday, the Chinese seemed eager to emphasize areas of common agreement and tone down anti-Soviet comments in deference to Tito's sensitivity on the subject. Tito was more willing to point out areas of disagreement with the Chinese, apparently to allay Soviet suspicions about his trip to China.*

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[] Tito received a massive welcome on his arrival. In an exchange of banquet toasts with Tito last night, Chairman Hua Kuo-feng said China supports Yugoslavia's "just struggle in defense of independence and sovereignty against foreign aggression and subversion"--code language for Belgrade's resistance to Soviet pressure. Hua called Tito's visit a "major event in Sino-Yugoslav relations."

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[] For his part, Tito carefully avoided any references that the USSR might construe as signaling cooperation between China and Yugoslavia against its interests. He made no mention of "hegemonism"--Peking's implicitly anti-Soviet formulation--although his Chinese host did. Tito spoke in positive terms of the Helsinki accords and "the relaxation of international tensions"--two issues that the Chinese dispute with the Soviets. He also flatly contradicted the frequent Chinese theme of the inevitability of war by saying that "war is not inevitable."

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[] The toasts of the two leaders indicated that the Non-aligned Movement and the Third World will figure prominently in their discussions this week. In the past, Peking has attempted to recruit less developed countries into its anti-Soviet crusade, but Belgrade has maintained that the nonaligned states should stay out of bilateral disputes.

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25X1 [] The activities of Tito's first day in Peking also suggest there has been no progress toward restoring party-to-party ties with the Chinese. Although Peking welcomed the purely party figures who are accompanying Tito, it has avoided giving any hint that the two sides can resolve their long-standing ideological differences. Hua did not reciprocate when Tito referred to him as "comrade" in his toast. []

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GUINEA: Aftermath of Market Riots

25X1 [] Conakry remains quiet following the antigovernment demonstrations last weekend over the Toure regime's economic failings. Troops in reduced numbers still patrol key points. The government radio has ignored the events so far, probably because President Toure and his inner circle have not decided how to play the embarrassing episode. The general feeling among city residents, according to the US Charge, is that the protestors were justified and that Toure has responded ineptly to their grievances.

25X1 [] Disturbances also flared in several provincial towns, and sporadic violence may be continuing in outlying localities. Few casualties have been reported, although some deaths have occurred in Conakry and elsewhere.

25X1 [] A senior government official has told the US Charge that Toure is confident the situation is under control. Government policy regarding the disturbances will be determined at a meeting of the ruling party's central committee after investigations now under way are completed. According to another Guinean official, Toure will not condone a return to private commerce as sought by the demonstrators or let them go unpunished.

25X1 [] Toure reportedly sees "remnants of colonialism and imperialism" behind the disorders and views the almost simultaneous outbursts in several population centers as a "counter-revolutionary plot." He specifically suspects that unemployed males, husbands of market women, and illegal traders and smugglers incited the women to riot. [] Toure is considering sending all such troublemakers to a farm far from Conakry. []

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ETHIOPIA: Internal Reorganization

25X1 [REDACTED] *Ethiopia's National Revolutionary Operations Command, established by decree on Saturday, is designed to enhance the country's efforts over the long term to cope with its various insurgencies and secessionist movements. The decree puts heavy emphasis on cooperation between military authorities and local civilian organizations, and it further diminishes the role assigned to Marxist civilian advisers.*

25X1 [REDACTED] Headed by Chairman Mengistu of the ruling Military Council, the new organization includes key members of the council, senior members of the cabinet, commanders of the military and police services, and representatives of the mass organizations for labor, women, and youth. The national operations command structure is to be paralleled at the regional, district, and sub-district levels and in the city of Addis Ababa. These organizations are charged with meeting the manpower and financial needs of the forces on the battlefronts and with assuring public support for the government's efforts.

25X1 [REDACTED] The national command is charged with assessing threats to national sovereignty and issuing directives to the armed forces, police, militia, regional commands, ministries, government offices, and mass organizations concerning their participation in the defense of the country.

25X1 [REDACTED] In most respects, the new structure follows that of the revolutionary and development committees set up in April. Those committees were presented as a means of involving a broad sector of the population in the implementation of government policy. Unlike the new organization which replaces them, however, their structure provided for formal representation of the civilian leftists.

25X1 [REDACTED] We have very little information on how the network of committees works or on how effective it has been. The relative speed and efficiency with which the people's militia is being recruited and fielded is indirect testimony, however, to the efficiency of some sort of local support mechanism.

25X1 [REDACTED] Earlier this month, Mengistu appealed to the Ethiopian masses to mobilize to meet the military threat from Somalia. In moving to establish the National Revolutionary Operations Command, he may be showing a willingness to try the

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traditional Ethiopian way of responding to military crises-- tactical withdrawal until large ad hoc armies recruited under local leadership can be mobilized and sent to join the fighting.

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BRIEFS

Eastern Europe:

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[redacted] Unconfirmed reports [redacted] indicate that Communist government and party chiefs will meet in Bulgaria in the next few days. We have no firm evidence that such a meeting has been called or of its intended purpose. Such high-level conclaves normally are not announced in advance.

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[redacted] The Hungarians have reported that Premier Lazar will make an official visit to Bulgaria in early September. There have also been announcements of a visit by Romanian President Ceausescu to Sofia, reportedly to take place during the first ten days of September. Bulgarian media yesterday reported the arrival in Sofia of Mongolian party chief Tsedenbal for a "brief, friendly visit." As of now, we have no reporting on the travel plans of other Communist leaders for the coming days.

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[redacted] Soviet President Brezhnev held separate meetings with all Warsaw Pact party chiefs in July and early August at his Crimean vacation retreat. Following his meeting in Moscow with Yugoslav President Tito, he returned to the Crimea on 19 August to continue his vacation.

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Angola-Portugal:

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[] Angola and Portugal have agreed to begin next week to repatriate about 1,000 Angolans who fled to Portugal during the 1975 Angolan civil war, according to Portuguese press reports. The refugees will be flown to Angola on planes chartered by both governments; efforts are also under way to secure the assistance of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in the repatriation effort. The repatriation program is part of Angola's efforts to get experienced workers and technical help for its ailing economy.

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[] The Portuguese Ambassador to Angola predicts that with UN aid, almost all of those wishing to return will be able to do so by the end of the year. The Ambassador says that negotiations have also gone well regarding the return to Portugal of Portuguese nationals held in Angolan jails and that this issue will probably be resolved in several weeks. []

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Portugal:

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[] Thirty people were injured and two arrested on Monday when police clashed twice with Communist-led farm workers over the implementation of agrarian reform near Evora in south-central Portugal. These first serious incidents since passage of the agrarian reform law over Communist opposition on 10 August indicate that the Soares government is resolved to implement the law. []

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